

Centerville Township Board Meeting – 9-8-21
County Commissioner's Report

- 1.) Recycling: Suttons Bay bins were moved from the School Parking lot to Herman Rd.
- 2.) Leelanau County Rural Broadband Survey: A BOC study meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, September 23rd at 6:00 pm at the Government Center to review and discuss the “Leelanau County Rural Broadband Survey.” The report will be sent to commissioners this week and Chris Scharrer from DCS Technology Design who conducted the study will present and discuss the findings.
- 3.) The County received 23 proposals suggesting how to spend the County's 6.2 million in American Recovery Plan funding. A special meeting will be held to discuss the proposals, I will forward the date as soon as it is available.
- 4.) At September 9th's County Budget meeting the controversial two new departments, finance and human resources, passed on a 4/3 vote as a new budget expense. Depending upon how it is structured, costs can range up to \$250,000 annually. Accounting services currently are located in the Clerk's office and the Human Resource function is part of the County Administrator's job description. The County has received top ratings on its audits, and great praise for the handling of finances in the Clerk's office. There have been no lawsuits filed or other unresolved HR issues over the past almost 10 years since Chet Janik has been the administrator. I continually asked for data providing a reason for this reorganization documenting if things were not being done or were done inappropriately. If a SPOT analysis or any other analysis had been conducted? What are the details, job descriptions, costs, etc. This reorganization was proposed without input from either the Clerk or the County administrator. Because no quantifiable, objective data ever has been presented I did not vote for this reorganization. Votes at the budget hearing are not final, however, placeholder costs were put in the budget. A final vote on the budget will be held in October 12th.
- 5.) A Special BOC meeting will be held Thursday, September 9th to discuss the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department's order mandating masks be worn by children and staff attending schools. Parents wishing to protect their children are divided on this issue with many feeling masks are detrimental to the wellbeing of their children and others feeling it is essential to provide a safe school environment for their children. It is the responsibility of the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department's chief Health Officer, Lisa Peacock, to make the decision of whether or not a mandate should be issued based on health data. The legislature gave this responsibility to the district Health Officers, rather than the Health Boards or County Boards of Commissioners, to ensure decisions would be based on health practices to safeguard the community rather than politics. I represent the Leelanau Board of Commissioners on the BLDHD and support the actions of our chief Health Officer and appreciate her leadership in making science-based decisions safeguarding the health and welfare of Leelanau residents.
- 6.) Apportionment Committee (County Redistricting) – two meetings have been held, the last one I attended on September 8th. Population variance maps were discussed as part of the presentation. In the 2020 population variance figures only two counties had a significant positive population variance, District #1 (Elmwood Township & Traverse City) with a population change from 3,097 in 2010 to 3,489 in 2020; an increase of 9.13% and a variance of +9.5%. The

other was District #5 (Leland and Centerville Townships) with a population of 3,317 in 2010 and 3,369 in 2020, an increase of 1.57% and a variance of +5.7%. Maps and accompanying data are available from the County Clerk's office.

7.) List of new internet service options available that I mentioned in August.

Cellular Home Internet service (uses modem, not hot spots):

- AT&T: https://www.att.com/buy/bundles/?product_suite=NBB
- T-Mobil <https://www.t-mobile.com/isp/eligibility>

**FCC Emergency Broadband Program helping families to obtain broadband services.
Program information and criteria:**

<https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>

Michigan ISPs participating in the program:

<https://www.fcc.gov/emergency-broadband-benefit-providers#Michigan>

Check if your home is eligible for these services:

Starlink Beta Expansion –: <https://www.starlink.com>

Charter (Spectrum) – Fiber Expansion <https://www.spectrum.com/cp/build?cmp=ruralbuild>

Respectfully Submitted by
Patricia Soutas-Little
Leelanau County Commissioner, District #5
Leland and Centerville Townships